



## **Lake Whitehurst Fisheries Management Popular Report 2003**

Lake Whitehurst is a 458-acre water supply lake owned by the City of Norfolk. This lake is divided into two distinct sections connected by a shallow canal, which is impassable to boat traffic due to an overhanging pipeline and bridge. The eastern section (also known as Little Creek Reservoir), located in Virginia Beach, is very shallow (mostly less than 8 feet) and can be accessed off of Northampton Blvd. The western section contains a series of large, deep pits (up to 30 feet) and can be accessed off of Shore Drive at the fishing station. The City of Norfolk requires an annual boat permit (\$40.00) which can be purchased at the fishing station on Shore Dr. in Norfolk. Bank fishing is restricted to the area at the fishing station, which also has two handicapped-accessible fishing piers. Fishing is permitted from sunrise to sunset and gas motors (up to 9.9 horsepower) are allowed.

Lake Whitehurst has become a walleye hot spot, with many fish in the 3 to 5-pound range creel. It is one of the few lakes in the state where anglers have been able to catch walleyes consistently. Walleyes are stocked at a rate of 100 per acre (45,800 per year). Currently, VDGIF is conducting an evaluation of stocking and participation in the walleye fishery by anglers through the use of angler diaries (log books). Twelve books were returned and showed that 12 anglers fished a total of 1180 hours and caught 728 walleye of which 61% (446) were kept.

Walleye were caught deep-jigging with spoons, jigs, and grubs, by casting or trolling crankbaits, and on live minnows or nightcrawlers. Catch rates (number of fish caught per hour of fishing) revealed that fishing was best from April through July and then peaked again in late October and November. Overall, 9 citation walleye (5 pounds or 25 inches) were reported during 2002!

There are a fair number of largemouth bass in Lake Whitehurst, and those caught are usually big. Other species include black crappie, bluegill, white perch, redear sunfish, and flathead catfish. The black crappie and white perch populations have shown great improvement in recent years, with fish over a pound becoming more common in population samples taken at the lake. These improvements are likely attributed to walleye stockings.

Located in the heart of Tidewater, Lake Whitehurst offers great fishing year round for a variety of fish for people living in an urban area. Even though the lake surrounds much of Norfolk International Airport, waterfowl, ospreys, and an occasional bald eagle can be seen taking advantage of the lakes abundant fish populations. Whatever your specialty; bass fishing, crappie fishing, or walleye fishing, Lake Whitehurst is great place to enjoy recreational fishing by yourself or with the entire family.